

PATENT COOPERATION TREATY

From the INTERNATIONAL SEARCHING AUTHORITY

PCT

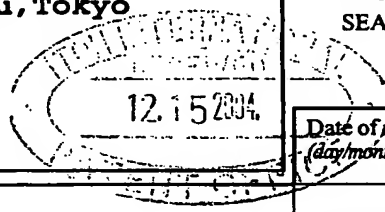
To:

ITOH, Tadahiko

**32nd Floor, Yebisu Garden
Place Tower, 20-3, Ebisu
4-chome, Shibuya-ku, Tokyo
1506032
Japan**

NOTIFICATION OF TRANSMITTAL OF
THE INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT AND
THE WRITTEN OPINION OF THE INTERNATIONAL
SEARCHING AUTHORITY, OR THE DECLARATION

(PCT Rule 44.1)



Date of mailing
(day/month/year)

14.12.2004

Applicant's or agent's file reference

R04028PCT

FOR FURTHER ACTION See paragraphs 1 and 4 below

International application No.

PCT/JP 2004 / 009051

International filing date
(day/month/year)

21.06.2004

Applicant

RICOH COMPANY, LTD.

1. ☒ The applicant is hereby notified that the international search report and the written opinion of the International Searching Authority have been established and are transmitted herewith.

Filing of amendments and statement under Article 19:

The applicant is entitled, if he so wishes, to amend the claims of the international application (see Rule 46):

When? The time limit for filing such amendments is normally two months from the date of transmittal of the international search report.

Where? Directly to the International Bureau of WIPO, 34 chemin des Colombettes
1211 Geneva 20, Switzerland, Facsimile No.: (41-22) 740.14.35

For more detailed instructions, see the notes on the accompanying sheet.

2. ☐ The applicant is hereby notified that no international search report will be established and that the declaration under Article 17(2)(a) to that effect and the written opinion of the International Searching Authority are transmitted herewith.
3. ☐ **With regard to the protest against payment of (an) additional fee(s) under Rule 40.2, the applicant is notified that:**
- ☐ the protest together with the decision thereon has been transmitted to the International Bureau together with the applicant's request to forward the texts of both the protest and the decision thereon to the designated Offices.
- ☐ no decision has been made yet on the protest; the applicant will be notified as soon as a decision is made.

4. Reminders:

Shortly after the expiration of **18 months** from the priority date, the international application will be published by the International Bureau. If the applicant wishes to avoid or postpone publication, a notice of withdrawal of the international application, or of the priority claim, must reach the International Bureau as provided in Rules 90bis.1 and 90bis.3, respectively, before the completion of the technical preparations for international publication.

Within **19 months** from the priority date, but only in respect of some designated Offices, a demand for international preliminary examination must be filed if the applicant wishes to postpone the entry into the national phase until **30 months** from the priority date (in some Offices even later); otherwise, the applicant must, within **20 months** from the priority date, perform the prescribed acts for entry into the national phase before those designated Offices.

In respect of other designated Offices, the time limit of **30 months** (or later) will apply even if no demand is filed within 19 months.

See the Annex to Form PCT/IB/301 and, for details about the applicable time limits, Office by Office, see the *PCT Applicant's Guide*, Volume II, National Chapters and the WIPO Internet site.

Name and mailing address of the ISA/JP

Japan Patent Office

3-4-3, Kasumigaseki, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 100-8915, Japan

Authorized officer

Commissioner of the Patent Office

Telephone No. +81-3-3581-1101 Ext. 3260

2P 9110

NOTES TO FORM PCT/ISA/220

These Notes are intended to give the basic instructions concerning the filing of amendments under Article 19. The Notes are based on the requirements of the Patent Cooperation Treaty, the Regulations and the Administrative Instructions under that Treaty. In case of discrepancy between these Notes and those requirements, the latter are applicable. For more detailed information, see also the *PCT Applicant's Guide*, a publication of WIPO.

In these Notes, "Article," "Rule" and "Section" refer to the provisions of the PCT, the PCT Regulations and the PCT Administrative Instructions, respectively.

INSTRUCTIONS CONCERNING AMENDMENTS UNDER ARTICLE 19

The applicant has, after having received the international search report and the written opinion of the International Searching Authority, one opportunity to amend the claims of the international application. It should however be emphasized that, since all parts of the international application (claims, description and drawings) may be amended during the international preliminary examination procedure, there is usually no need to file amendments of the claims under Article 19 except where, e.g. the applicant wants the latter to be published for the purposes of provisional protection or has another reason for amending the claims before international publication. Furthermore, it should be emphasized that provisional protection is available in some States only (see *PCT Applicant's Guide*, Annexes B1 and B2).

What parts of the international application may be amended ?

Under Article 19, only the claims may be amended.

During the international phase, the claims may also be amended (or further amended) under Article 34 before the International Preliminary Examining Authority. The description and drawings may only be amended under Article 34 before the International Preliminary Examining Authority.

Upon entry into the national phase, all parts of the international application may be amended under Article 28 or, where applicable, Article 41.

When ? Within 2 months from the date of transmittal of the international search report or 16 months from the priority date, whichever time limit expires later. It should be noted, however, that the amendments will be considered as having been received on time if they are received by the International Bureau after the expiration of the applicable time limit but before the completion of the technical preparations for international publication (Rule 46.1).

Where not to file the amendments ?

The amendments may only be filed with the International Bureau and not with the receiving Office or the International Searching Authority (Rule 46.2).

Where a demand for international preliminary examination has been/is filed, see below.

How ? Either by cancelling one or more entire claims, by adding one or more new claims or by amending the text of one or more of the claims as filed.

A replacement sheet must be submitted for each sheet of the claims which, on account of an amendment or amendments, differs from the sheet originally filed.

All the claims appearing on a replacement sheet must be numbered in Arabic numerals. Where a claim is cancelled, no renumbering of the other claims is required. In all cases where claims are renumbered, they must be renumbered consecutively (Administrative Instructions, Section 205(b)).

The amendments must be made in the language in which the international application is to be published.

What documents must/may accompany the amendments ?

Letter (Section 205(b)):

The amendments must be submitted with a letter.

The letter will not be published with the international application and the amended claims. It should not be confused with the "Statement under Article 19(1)" (see below, under "Statement under Article 19(1)").

The letter must be in English or French, at the choice of the applicant. However, if the language of the international application is English, the letter must be in English; if the language of the international application is French, the letter must be in French.

NOTES TO FORM PCT/ISA/220 (continued)

The letter must indicate the differences between the claims as filed and the claims as amended. It must, in particular, indicate, in connection with each claim appearing in the international application (it being understood that identical indications concerning several claims may be grouped), whether

- (i) the claim is unchanged;
- (ii) the claim is cancelled;
- (iii) the claim is new;
- (iv) the claim replaces one or more claims as filed;
- (v) the claim is the result of the division of a claim as filed.

The following examples illustrate the manner in which amendments must be explained in the accompanying letter:

1. [Where originally there were 48 claims and after amendment of some claims there are 51]:
"Claims 1 to 29, 31, 32, 34, 35, 37 to 48 replaced by amended claims bearing the same numbers; claims 30, 33 and 36 unchanged; new claims 49 to 51 added."
2. [Where originally there were 15 claims and after amendment of all claims there are 11]:
"Claims 1 to 15 replaced by amended claims 1 to 11."
3. [Where originally there were 14 claims and the amendments consist in cancelling some claims and in adding new claims]:
"Claims 1 to 6 and 14 unchanged; claims 7 to 13 cancelled; new claims 15, 16 and 17 added." or
"Claims 7 to 13 cancelled; new claims 15, 16 and 17 added; all other claims unchanged."
4. [Where various kinds of amendments are made]:
"Claims 1-10 unchanged; claims 11 to 13, 18 and 19 cancelled; claims 14, 15 and 16 replaced by amended claim 14; claim 17 subdivided into amended claims 15, 16 and 17; new claims 20 and 21 added."

"Statement under Article 19(1)" (Rule 46.4)

The amendments may be accompanied by a statement explaining the amendments and indicating any impact that such amendments might have on the description and the drawings (which cannot be amended under Article 19(1)).

The statement will be published with the international application and the amended claims.

It must be in the language in which the international application is to be published.

It must be brief, not exceeding 500 words if in English or if translated into English.

It should not be confused with and does not replace the letter indicating the differences between the claims as filed and as amended. It must be filed on a separate sheet and must be identified as such by a heading, preferably by using the words "Statement under Article 19(1)."

It may not contain any disparaging comments on the international search report or the relevance of citations contained in that report. Reference to citations, relevant to a given claim, contained in the international search report may be made only in connection with an amendment of that claim.

Consequence if a demand for international preliminary examination has already been filed

If, at the time of filing any amendments and any accompanying statement, under Article 19, a demand for international preliminary examination has already been submitted, the applicant must preferably, at the time of filing the amendments (and any statement) with the International Bureau, also file with the International Preliminary Examining Authority a copy of such amendments (and of any statement) and, where required, a translation of such amendments for the procedure before that Authority (see Rules 55.3(a) and 62.2, first sentence). For further information, see the Notes to the demand form (PCT/IPEA/401).

If a demand for international preliminary examination is made, the written opinion of the International Searching Authority will, except in certain cases where the Authority which established the written opinion does not also act as International Preliminary Examining Authority, be considered to be a written opinion of the International Preliminary Examining Authority. In this case, the applicant is invited to submit to the International Preliminary Examining Authority a written reply together, where appropriate, with amendments before the expiration of 3 months from the date of mailing of Form PCT/ISA/220 or before the expiration of 22 months from the priority date, whichever expires later (Rule 43bis.1(c)).

Consequence with regard to translation of the international application for entry into the national phase

The applicant's attention is drawn to the fact that, upon entry into the national phase, a translation of the claims as amended under Article 19 may have to be furnished to the designated/elected Offices, instead of, or in addition to, the translation of the claims as filed.

For further details on the requirements of each designated/elected Office, see the *PCT Applicant's Guide*, Volume II.

ATTENTIONS

1. An applicant should pay attention that there is an amendment period for requesting to International Bureau computing from the dispatch date of the international search report under Treaty Article 19 (1) and Regulations 46.1.
2. An applicant should pay attention to the period prescribed by Treaty Article 22 (2).
3. Demand for copy of documents

Copy of the documents described in the international search report.

An applicant can request the copy of these cited documents to the Japanese Patent Office, however, National Center for Industrial Property Information (Japan Patent Office building 2nd floor) handles inspection and copying of official gazettes and copying of other document etc.

[Contact and Reference]

National Center for Industrial Property Information

〒100-0013

3-4-3 Kasumigaseki Chiyoda-ku Tokyo

(Japan Patent Office building 2nd floor)

(Official gazettes) Industrial Property Information Reference Department

TEL: 03-3581-1101 Ext. 3811,3812

(Others) Industrial Property Reference Materials Department

TEL: 03-3581-1101 Ext. 3831,3832,3833

Japan Patent Information Organization also services sales of the copy of these cited documents. Those who request copying of the cited documents should pay attention to the following points.

[Application Method]

- (1) As for Patent (Utility Model, Design) Gazette, the following points shall be defined clearly.

- ☐ Types of patent, utility model, and design
- ☐ Fiscal year and number of publication of application or publication of unexamined application (or patent number, registration number)
- ☐ Necessary number of paper sheets

- (2) As for documents except for the gazette, the following points are required attention.

- ☐ Be sure to attach the copy of the international search report (which shall be returned).

[Application and Reference]

〒135-0016

4-1-7 Toyo Koto-ku, Tokyo

Sato Daiya Building

Foundation of Japan Patent Information Organization

Information Processing Department

Copy Service section

TEL: 03-3508-2313

Note: The period for requesting the copy of the documents to Japan Patent Office is set to 7 years from the international application date.

PATENT COOPERATION TREATY

PCT

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

(PCT Article 18 and Rules 43 and 44)

Applicant's or agent's file reference R04028PCT	<table style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; text-align: center;"> FOR FURTHER ACTION </td> <td style="width: 50%; text-align: center;"> see Form PCT/ISA/220 as well as, where applicable, item 5 below. </td> </tr> </table>	FOR FURTHER ACTION	see Form PCT/ISA/220 as well as, where applicable, item 5 below.
FOR FURTHER ACTION	see Form PCT/ISA/220 as well as, where applicable, item 5 below.		
International application No. PCT/JP 2004/ 009051	<table style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; text-align: center;"> International filing date (day/month/year) 21.06.2004 </td> <td style="width: 50%; text-align: center;"> (Earliest) Priority Date (day/month/year) 25.06.2003 </td> </tr> </table>	International filing date (day/month/year) 21.06.2004	(Earliest) Priority Date (day/month/year) 25.06.2003
International filing date (day/month/year) 21.06.2004	(Earliest) Priority Date (day/month/year) 25.06.2003		
Applicant RICOH COMPANY, LTD.			

This international search report has been prepared by this International Searching Authority and is transmitted to the applicant according to Article 18. A copy is being transmitted to the International Bureau.

This international search report consists of a total of 5 sheets.

☐ It is also accompanied by a copy of each prior art document cited in this report.

1. Basis of the report

a. With regard to the language, the international search was carried out on the basis of the international application in the language in which it was filed, unless otherwise indicated under this item.

☐ the international search was carried out on the basis of a translation of the international application furnished to this Authority (Rule 23.1(b)).

b. ☐ With regard to any nucleotide and/or amino acid sequence disclosed in the international application, see Box No. I.

2. ☐ Certain claims were found unsearchable (See Box II).

3. ☒ Unity of invention is lacking (See Box III).

4. With regard to the title,

☒ the text is approved as submitted by the applicant.

☐ the text has been established by this Authority to read as follows:

5. With regard to the abstract,

☐ the text is approved as submitted by the applicant.

☒ the text has been established, according to Rule 38.2(b), by this Authority as it appears in Box No. IV. The applicant may, within one month from the date of mailing of this international search report, submit comments to this Authority.

6. With regard to the drawings,

a. the figure of the drawings to be published with the abstract is Figure No. 7

☐ as suggested by the applicant.

☒ as selected by this Authority, because the applicant failed to suggest a figure.

☐ as selected by this Authority, because this figure better characterizes the invention.

b. ☐ none of the figures is to be published with the abstract.

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.

PCT/JP 2004 / 009051

Box No. II Observations where certain claims were found unsearchable (Continuation of item 2 of first sheet)

This international search report has not been established in respect of certain claims under Article 17(2)(a) for the following reasons:

1. ☐ Claims Nos.:
because they relate to subject matter not required to be searched by this Authority, namely:

2. ☐ Claims Nos.:
because they relate to parts of the international application that do not comply with the prescribed requirements to such an extent that no meaningful international search can be carried out, specifically:

3. ☐ Claims Nos.:
because they are dependent claims and are not drafted in accordance with the second and third sentences of Rule 6.4(a).

Box No. III Observations where unity of invention is lacking (Continuation of item 3 of first sheet)

This International Searching Authority found multiple inventions in this international application, as follows:

see extra sheet

1. ☐ As all required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant, this international search report covers all searchable claims.
2. ☐ As all searchable claims could be searched without effort justifying an additional fee, this Authority did not invite payment of any additional fee.
3. ☐ As only some of the required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant, this international search report covers only those claims for which fees were paid, specifically claims Nos.:
4. ☒ No required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant. Consequently, this international search report is restricted to the invention first mentioned in the claims; it is covered by claims Nos.:
claims 1-5, 12-18, 21-22

Remark on Protest

☐

The additional search fees were accompanied by the applicant's protest.

☒

No protest accompanied the payment of additional search fees.

Box No. IV Text of the abstract (Continuation of item 5 of the first sheet)

A sub tank is provided that includes a case at which an air flow path is formed, the air flow path including an entrance flow path portion that is connected to an ink accommodating portion of the case, and a cross flow path portion that continues from the entrance flow path portion. The cross flow path portion extends in an upper diagonal direction with respect to a reference plane corresponding to the ink liquid level at a standstill state.

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.

PCT/JP 2004/009051

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

Int.Cl.⁷ B41J2/175

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

Int.Cl.⁷ B41J2/175

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched
 Japanese Utility Model Gazette 1922-1996, Japanese Publication of Unexamined Utility Model Applications 1971-2004, Japanese Registered Utility Model Gazette 1994-2004, Japanese Gazette Containing the Utility Model 1996-2004

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	JP 2001-301187 A (Seiko Epson Corporation) 2001.10.30, claims, column 6, lines 13-column 14, lines 19, Figs 1-14 (Family: None)	1, 2, 5, 12-14, 17, 21, 22
A		3, 4, 15, 16, 18

☐ Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C.☐ See patent family annex.

* Special categories of cited documents:

"A" document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance

"E" earlier application or patent but published on or after the international filing date

"L" document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified)

"O" document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means

"P" document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed

"T" later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention

"X" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone

"Y" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art

"&" document member of the same patent family

Date of the actual completion of the international search

25.11.2004

Date of mailing of the international search report

14.12.2004

Name and mailing address of the ISA/JP

Japan Patent Office

3-4-3, Kasumigaseki, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 100-8915, Japan

Authorized officer

TOSHIHIKO OSAKI

Telephone No. +81-3-3581-1101 Ext. 3260

2P

9110

The "special technical features" of claims 1-5,12-18,21-22 relates to [A liquid container comprising: liquid accommodating portion for accommodating the liquid; and an air flow path for discharging air from the liquid accommodating portion; wherein the air flow path includes an entrance flow path portion that is connected to the liquid accommodating portion, and a continued flow path portion that continues from the entrance flow path portion; and the continued flow path portion is arranged to extend in an upper diagonal direction with respect to a reference plane corresponding to a liquid accommodating portion at a standstill state],

While the "special technical features" of claims 6-11,19-20,23-24 relates to [A liquid container comprising: a container main body that forms a liquid accommodating portion for accommodating the liquid; a flexible film member that is attached to the container main body and is adapted to seal an opening of the liquid accommodating portion; and an air flow path that is formed at the container main body and is adapted to discharge air from the liquid accommodating portion; wherein the air flow path includes a flow path portion that does not have a wall formed by the flexible film member],

the "special technical features" of claims 25-37 relates to [The sub tank comprising: a negative pressure generation unit that includes a flexible film member that is disposed on at least one side of the sub tank, and an elastic member that forces the flexible film member outward with respect to the sub tank, the negative pressure generation unit being adapted to expand and contract in response to the supply and discharge of the liquid, and generate a negative pressure within the sub tank],

the "special technical features" of claims 38-45 relates to [An amount of liquid that is consumed from the sub tank is detected and a liquid supply operation of supplying liquid to the sub tank is performed according to the detected liquid consumption amount],

and the "special technical features" of claims 46-54 relates to [A nozzle restoration operation is performed in which the sub tank is opened by the open-close unit when an amount of air within the sub tank is greater than or equal to a first predetermined amount, or when an amount of liquid within the sub tank is less than a second predetermined amount, and the sub tank is not opened when the amount of air within the sub tank is less than the first predetermined amount and the amount of liquid within the sub tank is greater than or equal to the second predetermined amount].